

Beijing 5899, May 7, 1982, Secret/Nodis

Vice President's First Day in Beijing

"Vice president Bush was received in Beijing May 7 with full military honors. He was greeted formally by China's ranking Vice Minister, Wan-Li."

The meeting with Huang Hua "focused solely on the Taiwan arms issue, despite the Vice President's effort to change the subject to international and strategic issues mid-way through the conversation. Huang's presentation was relatively restrained and moderate, but also intransigent. He reiterated familiar themes of China's long standing opposition to US arms sales to Taiwan and gave no important ground on the fundamental area of difference [sic] China's demand that the US promise to end arms sales within a certain period of time [obvious omission]. He did assert, however, that China's present position on ending sales quote within a certain period of time unquote is a retreat from his line to the President last October."

In answer to the assertion by the Vice President that China had changed the rules in asking that arms sales end, "Huang insisted that China had always said there must be talks after normalization to resolve the issue....He tried, unsuccessfully, to engage the Vice President in communique negotiation directly, and resisted the Vice President's suggestion that we might seek to make further progress on that by having side talks between the experts."

Beijing 5912, May 9, 1982, Secret/Nodis

Communique Suggestions from the Chinese

"Following the morning meeting and luncheon with Deng Xiaoping on May 8, Vice Foreign Minister Han Xu initiated an informal session at the Diaoyutai Guest House with Ambassador Hummel and Assistant Secretary Holdridge. Also present on the Chinese side Zhu Qishen, Hang Zai, Zhang Wenpu, Wang Hongbao and interpreter Shi Yanhua. A/S Holdridge was accompanied by Ambassador Hummel, DCM Freeman, EA/C Director Rope, and Special Assistant Brown.

"Han presented informal proposals revising paragraphs 4-7 of the Chinese draft of January 22. Text of Chinese revised paragraphs is as follows: Begin Text. Revisions proposed informally by Han Xu February 15 to Chinese draft of Joint Communique (paras 4 on).

"4. The Chinese government reiterates that the question of Taiwan is China's internal affair. The message to com-

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patriots on Taiwan issued by China on January 1st, 1979, promulgated the fundamental policy of striving for peaceful reunification of the motherland. The Nine-Point Proposal put forward by China as a further step on September 30, 1981, represented a major effort to seek a peaceful solution to the Taiwan question. The new situation which has emerged with regard to the Taiwan question also provides a favorable condition for the settlement of the question of US arms sales to Taiwan.

"5. The US government attaches great importance to its relations with China and reiterates that it respects and has no intention of infringing on Chinese sovereignty or territorial integrity or pursuing a policy of 'two Chinas' or 'one China/one Taiwan.'

"6. The US government states that its arms sales to Taiwan will not exceed either in qualitative or in quantitative terms the level of those supplied in recent years, since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and China. The US government gives the assurance that the United States does not intend to sell arms to Taiwan over a long period of time and that it will take measures to reduce gradually and finally cease over a period of time its arms sales to Taiwan altogether.

"7. Taking into consideration the fact that the question of US arms sales to Taiwan is an issue left over from history, and in view of the above assurance given by the US government, the Chinese government agrees to allow some more time for the achievement of a thorough settlement of this issue.

"8. The two sides will continue to keep in touch with each other on the settlement of the question of US arms sales to Taiwan, so as to review the implementation of this agreement.

"9 (Old 7, unchanged). End text.

"Han stressed that those ideas were being presented in formally for the consideration of the US in response to previous informal discussion and suggestions by the US."

In responding, Holdridge stressed the need for linkage and in particular to a reference to the Nine Point Proposal "being 'China's steadfast policy.'" He said that "it was quite possible to state that we would not sell arms over a long period of time and would anticipate rpt anticipate that they would diminish over time provided we added 'therefore' prior to the statement of US policy." Holdridge also said that "we found the proposal in new paragraph 8 difficult." We would review the Chinese suggestions "carefully."

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"Han said that some of the paragraphs which he had not raised contained agreed language and others 'were not difficult.'"

Embassy comment: These are the first Chinese proposals since January 22 and "contain some movement toward us. Han implied that the Chinese would have no major difficulty with our February 15 revision of the first three paragraphs of the Chinese draft of January 22, although they may seek some minor changes."

Notes that in paragraph 4, the statement on Taiwan "is now put in terms of a unilateral assertion by the Chinese side, not a general statement as before. This is a significant concession" and suggests that China will accept a repeating of language contained in the communique on the normalization of relations.

Paragraph 5 "appears to be acceptable, with some minor changes."

The key sentence in paragraph 6 of the revised draft calls for arms sales to cease 'over a period of time' (jingguo yi duan shijian), a much more vague and open-ended term than that used in the February 15 draft, 'within a certain period of time.'"

Han confirmed that the last paragraph of the US draft of May 5 would stay in.

Beijing 5918, May 9, 1982, Secret/Nodis-Sensitive

Memcon: Deng Xiaoping-Vice President Bush May 8, 1982, at the Fujian Room, the Great Hall of the People.

The Vice President opened. He emphasized the President's commitment to the Shanghai and normalization communiques and stated that "no President can cut off all arms sales to Taiwan."

Deng began by citing those in the US who take China for granted and who say that China needs the US and will swallow whatever the US does. He said that the TRA "violates China's sovereignty." He said that "as long as the TRA exists there will be a shadow over our relations. But the law is passed. What can we do? Is there a way out so our relationship is not affected by the law? I think there is a way out. I know little of US law but the President has great power to influence how the law is carried out." Deng mentioned former Ambassador Woodcock and the Vice President "interrupted to ask if Woodcock or anyone else had promised a lasting cessation of arms sales. Deng said no."

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Deng said that "he decided at that time that he might as well leave this issue aside for then and go ahead and establish relations." Today, the Taiwan issue "is a potential crisis."

Deng: "Since President Reagan took over, in addition to continuing arms sales, he did other things that Huang Hua had called provocative--many actions that were hard to tolerate. We look not just at Taiwan. For example, your policy toward Israel, South Africa, South Korea and others." Some in the US see Taiwan as an unsinkable aircraft carrier, and some see these other countries in the same way. "If this is your guiding thought you are back to the Dulles doctrine, and an anti-China policy."

The Vice President replied and Deng said "let's stick to Taiwan....Why is there a TRA when we have good relations between us. There is no need for TRA except to split Taiwan from the mainland. We feel this is your guiding thought. In the past 16 months you have carried out many actions to strengthen your relations with Taiwan in addition to arms sales, many actions that proved embarrassing to us. Huang Hua has a list but you know what they are. The Chinese people are asking about this. The People's Consultative Council and the NPC deputies and many others are asking these questions." Deng recalls asking Haig why the President's daughter visited Taiwan.

The Vice President replied: "The Reagan Administration is behaving better than you would have expected.....Deng said we know the US wants consultations and good relations. Then he added, not long ago President Carter's son visited Taiwan." The Vice President stated that "you haven't seen any Bush boys out there. Deng said again you have so many laws, why not a law of the family. I have a son in school in the US and this shows my confidence in the relationship. If I lose confidence I will bring him home."

The Vice President returned to the question of arms sales and asked: "Do you feel during the normalization negotiations there was a commitment made to you to cut off arms sales to Taiwan, not necessarily in writing?"

"Deng said no, but this is the central question.... We will use Taiwan as the criterion to measure the stability of our relations. Only when the question is resolved properly will we have mutual trust so the relationship can develop smoothly. This is a crucial issue. We must answer to the Chinese people."

On arms sales: "We are grateful that President Reagan states that there is only one China and that he respects China's sovereignty. But we need actions, like controlling sales to Taiwan that are obstructing efforts to resolve the Taiwan issue." China cannot guarantee that it will pursue

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a policy of peaceful reunification. "Chiang Ching-kuo knows you will not undertake to cut off arms sales. This is reliable information....US leaders should commit themselves 'to gradually reduce and finally terminate arms sales to Taiwan within a certain period of time.' Modalities can be worked out. By modalities I mean the wording in a communique. But in private there must be an understanding on this point. This proposal is a great concession by China and will require a lot of explaining to our people. I and my colleagues have told the US that we have no leeway and I am telling you this candidly."

Deng on the TRA: "The President has the power to carry out the TRA in certain ways. The TRA does not prevent/preclude a commitment to gradual reductions, and final termination of arms sales to Taiwan within a certain period of time."

"Deng said modalities may be discussed but it is not difficult to commit yourself to reduction and termination within a certain period of time. If you accept this then we can both explain to our people and we can provide answers to the Third World who have strong feelings about our relationship. The Soviet Union hopes to break up that relationship. If Sino-US relations retrogress, the Soviets would be given more maneuvering room but Chinese policy toward the Soviets will not change. If we two can privately agree, all the dark clouds will disappear and we can get on with our relationship. ...Why does China persist on Taiwan? We look on Taiwan from a global-strategic perspective. China has done more than Western Europe to deal with the polar bear."

The discussion moved on to the Middle East and the Falkland Islands. Deng then said: "Let us return to our original talks. How can we resolve our problems? After full consideration, we ask you to undertake a commitment. Can you? If you can't, what is the way out?"

The Vice President urged continued contact between the MFA and Ambassador Hummel. Deng: "I agree to continue our discussion with the Ambassador but it is my view that if high-level leaders can't come up with a clear approach to the question, lower level discussion will get nowhere. When you talk with President Reagan I hope he will take a wise decision. In the meantime, I hope there will be no unexpected actions like FMS sales and F5E joint production. If there are, China will have to respond in a way neither wants to see. I hope the US will reply as soon as possible to our request for a commitment. Now is the time to resolve the issue and there should be no more delay. I believe leaders of both countries are wracking their brains to solve the problem."

Deng concludes: "Please extend my personal greetings to President Reagan."

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Beijing 5915, May 9, 1982, Secret/Nodis

Summary of Deng meeting with Vice President Bush

Embassy calls meeting "very cordial and friendly but also very candid...."

"The Vice President had asked for a few minutes with Vice Chairman Deng at the outset of his scheduled meeting at 1000 hours, Sat May 9, and so the two men retired to a small room after the photographing of the opening was finished. The Vice President had with him only Amb. Hummel and Admiral Murphy. Deng had his interpreter, Foreign Minister Huang Hua, Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Wenjin, Vice Foreign Minister Han Xu, and notetaker Ni Yaoli. As it turned out, they spent two hours and forty minutes in this small group because Deng seemed unwilling to break off and join the larger official party that had been scheduled to hold talks."

Summarizes talks as reported in Beijing 5918 (Memcon)

"The Vice President could not budge Deng from this [i.e., a private understanding given by the US that the US will "'gradually reduce and finally terminate arms sales to Taiwan within a certain period of time.'"] position, and finally agreed that he would discuss the proposal with the President. The Vice President's preliminary reactions are as follows:

"A. We cannot of course give any secret or private assurances of the kind he says he requires.

"B. There may be more leeway than now appears in Deng's formula, which does not actually ask us right now to set a date for termination of arms sales to Taiwan. He may have in mind trying to extract such a firm date later on....We were asked to reply to his request for a private assurance, and Premier Zhou [sic] later said he hoped we would reply 'soon.'"

C. After Deng's conversation with the Vice President, the Chinese "initiated an informal discussion with Ambassador Hummel and Assistant Secretary Holdridge at which they put forward alternative language to replace four of the paragraphs of their original draft communique. Their suggestions were a step forward in certain respects, but do not fully meet our requirements. Moreover, they reiterated that their proposals for the communique did not obviate Vice Chairman Deng's request for private assurances that US arms sales to Taiwan would end....Holdridge and Hummel noted that their new formulations presented certain difficulties and pointed to areas where changes would be necessary to meet our requirements.

"D. Deng emphasized that no matter what happened in US-PRC relations, the PRC would not change its policy of confrontation with the Soviets."